

Chesapeake Bay Program Cleanup Strategy

The First Chesapeake Bay Conference was held in 1933; we've come a long way since then. The problems impacting the Bay have progressed geometrically with population density growth. As of 1983, industrial and agricultural pollution were designated as the foremost causes of the degradation of the Chesapeake Bay's health. The first and original Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) was signed into law; in room 400 of the Senate Office Building in 1983; by 125 signers, of which I am one.

Today; we are faced with a far greater threat to the existence of the Bay. This threat is non-point source pollution caused by every individual living within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (all 64,000 square miles of it). Our actions; whether corporate or private; are determining the life or death of our National Treasure; the Chesapeake Bay. At this point in time, the diagnosis for the Bay is dark and critical. We must act swiftly and decisively on the opportunity presented to us by President Obama; wherein he issued the Executive Order designating the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay as a National Priority Project. Relying on the trial and error database evolution of the CBP is a good basic guideline for the avenues of remedy necessary to save the Bay. However; with the limited time given (September 9, 2009) to develop the Action Plan for funding; we must think and plan outside the box to ensure success from our efforts. The following is a small list of bullet point innovations for funded actions; which if properly implemented could show marked improvements in the "State of the Bay".

1. Expand the monitoring of the Bay to focus not only on the nutrients as the guide for the Bay's status; but to further toxic testing, monitoring, and studies throughout the Bay Ecosystem. The worst case scenario for nutrient damage is eutrophication. Toxic damage can effect every level of life within the Bay ecosystem. Also ; over time, toxic pollution can and will change the physical chemistry of the entire ecosystem. To not pursue toxic study and monitoring with the same intensity as is given to nutrients, would be a grave strategic error for any proposed cleanup action.
2. The Buffer Zones surrounding every waterbody; both tidal and non-tidal, must be greatly increased and enhanced to filter the non-point source pollution from the water returning to the open waterways ; with extreme focus on population growth density. At present, the needs of the ecosystem outweigh the means for protection of the Bay Ecosystem and its survival.
3. Integration of enhanced technologies to further expedite restoration throughout the Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem.
4. Bay wide Watershed BAN on dredging or disturbing high priority toxic and hazardous sediments. Redistribution releases of toxic pollution into the open waters of the Bay at present could very well preclude and nullify any restorative actions.

The issues entered herein are only a brief statement of possible solutions to the Bay's Restoration efforts. I would be more than happy to further and explicitly define and technically outline specific measures for action funding in this most needed activity. As ever in service, I am,

Russell S. Donnelly
Environmental Analyst
2114 Oak Road
Sparrows Point, Maryland 21219
Phone: 410-388-0898 direct
410-477-3808 alternate
Fax: 410-388-0002
Email: irsd7@verizon.net

Comments on Draft Reports (A – G) for the Presidential Executive Order Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Strategy

Upon review, the Executive Order (EO) Draft Reports have excellent overall potential. EO Drafts F and G show a more solid and comprehensive realistic approach than the others (A – E). However, there are several observations which need to be addressed to yield a fully functional and successful Final Strategy.

First, and foremost, the greatest overall focus of these EO Drafts is centered, almost exclusively, on nutrients and sediments as the prime directive for allocated funding and actions to be taken for this Chesapeake Bay (CB) Cleanup Strategy. While impressive, this proposed strategy is flawed and will not yield the desired results for successfully restoring the Chesapeake Bay.

Most environmental agencies (NOAA, DOI, EPA, USDA, etc.) tend to usually undertake such projects by adhering to and utilizing the comprehensive triad approach which has proven to be highly successful for actions taken. At present, the EO Drafts leave two major critical issues virtually absent from these Reports. Biological Factors and Toxic Pollution must be listed, highlighted, and fully incorporated in this EO Strategy package with the same level of intensity, focus, and importance as is being given to Nutrients and Sediments. Consider that for approximately every 1% of nutrient pollution there is at least a minimal 10 % influx of toxic pollution entering the Chesapeake Bay Watershed from broad based Point and Non-Point Sources across 64,000 square miles of air, land, and water. Without seriously addressing Biological Factors and Toxic Pollution, you may be successful in improving water clarity and even realize an increase in aquatic life productivity; yet, unfortunately you may very well have increased aquatic mortality, inability for aquatic reproduction, mutations, widespread disease, aberrational behavior, disruption of the aquatic genetic pool, developmental defects, and also detectable alterations in aquatic life and the chemistry of the Bay itself (already notably recorded). Nutrients and sediment, in a worse case scenario, can cause mass overgrowth and eutrophication. On the other hand, toxins can cause acute, chronic, and cumulative effects which can permanently change life itself down to the biochemical level.

Once again, biological factors and toxic pollution are extremely critical matters which must be equally addressed in this planned Strategy to insure a successful positive outcome for our efforts.

Next, we have spent in excess of thirty years testing, studying, and laboring on the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem. The accumulated Data Base is massive, yet not cohesive and fully integrated. We must strongly consider using our new found tools of Environmental Evaluation to review the CB data base (from all sources) and generate our renewed Strategy Plan from our historical records of successes and failures. If properly researched and evaluated, the resultant product would concisely and decisively reveal a most logical and reliable course of action for this renewed Strategy. Now is not the time to reinvent the wheel; rather we must reproduce a streamlined, successful, cost efficient Strategy that works.

This Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Strategy may well be legislated as Law. Therefore we must think and act carefully and get this Strategy package right. This is the first time in my limited 52 year existence that I have witnessed direct Presidential action of this magnitude for our Chesapeake Bay. We may never have another opportunity such as this again in our lifetime.

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We , all of us collectively, have this one opportunity to construct the working cornerstone and foundation for the continued existence and restored proliferation of this National Treasure, our Chesapeake Bay . We must not falter or fail in our duty to deliver a living , functioning, and productive Legacy to our future generations. When I was young it was an unwritten law to leave anything we touch or use in as good as or better condition than we found it; besides who amongst us will face the bright young faces of our heirs and explain why the Chesapeake Bay died.

Please note: For the Record. I am one of the 125 signers of the original Chesapeake Bay Program (1983)

As ever in service, I am,

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